

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Whitham on December 28, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

In Claim 1, Line 17, please delete "or fuel" and insert -- or fuel (B) --.

In Claim 11, Line 3, please delete "(LaxSryCazMnO3)." And insert – (La_xSr_yCa_zMnO₃). --.

In Claim 13, Line 17, please delete "or fuel" and insert -- or fuel (B) --.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-14 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Fahle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,345,009) teaches a fuel cell stack that comprises porous (permeable) cathode and anode electrodes spaced apart with an electrolyte matrix layer therebetween. Col. 4, Lines 33-45. Fahle further teaches that the outer

Art Unit: 1793

edges of the stack form four outwardly facing planar surfaces and each surface is substantially completely covered by a reactant gas manifold that introduces air/gas or fuel/hydrogen to the stack. Col. 4-5, Lines 66-68 and 1-9. However, Fahle does not teach that the manifold stubs is arranged on the end faces of the anode and cathode plates such that the manifold stubs are electrically connected in parallel to the anode and cathode plates.

Kamoshita (U.S. Patent No. 4,623,596) teaches a fuel cell stack that comprises anode and cathode electrodes stacked between an electrolyte layer. Figures 1 and 4. The fuel cell stack further comprises connections to the plates for carrying away and supplying fuel and gas. Figures 1 and 4. However, despite the similar physical configuration, Kamoshita teaches that the fuel cells are connected in series and that the manifold is electrically insulated from the fuel cell stack, meaning that the fuel cells in the stack cannot be electrically connected in parallel via the manifold pieces.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ELI MEKHLIN whose telephone number is (571)270-7597. The examiner can normally be reached on 5/4/9.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on 571-272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1793

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/ELI MEKHLIN/
Examiner, Art Unit 1793

/J.A. LORENZO/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 1793